

Senate Bill 107

By: Senators Tarver of the 22nd and Powell of the 23rd

AS PASSED

AN ACT

To amend an Act creating the City Court of Richmond County, now the State Court of Richmond County, approved September 22, 1881 (Ga. L. 1880-81, p. 574), as amended, so as to change the second division's jurisdiction to make the second division judge coequal with those judges of Division 1; to remove references to associate judge; to create a third division of the State Court of Richmond County; to provide for the judge of the third division and their qualifications, selection, duties, responsibilities, and compensation; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

An Act creating the City Court of Richmond County, now the State Court of Richmond County, approved September 22, 1881 (Ga. L. 1880-81, p. 574), as amended, is amended by revising Section 2-2 as follows:

"SECTION 2-2.

- (a)(1) In addition to all other judges of the state court, there shall be one judge of the second division. The qualifications and election of the judge shall be as provided by general law.
- (2) Except as otherwise provided in this section, said judge shall have and may exercise all powers, duties, jurisdictions, privileges, and immunities of the present judge of the State Court of Richmond County under the provision of this Act and the general law applicable to said present judge.
- (b) The initial judge shall be appointed by the Governor for an initial term beginning on July 1, 1997, and expiring on December 31, 1998, and upon the election and qualification of a successor."

SECTION 2.

Said Act is further amended by revising Section 2-3 as follows:

"SECTION 2-3.

(a) The judge shall receive the same compensation as the present judge of the State Court of Richmond County payable in equal monthly installments from the funds of Augusta-Richmond County, Georgia. The judge is designated as a full-time judge and may not engage in the private practice of law.

(b) Any salary supplement heretofore enacted by Augusta-Richmond County, Georgia, shall also be applicable to the judge."

SECTION 3.

Said Act is further amended by revising Section 2-5 as follows:

"SECTION 2-5.

The chief judge shall receive additional compensation for performing the handling of the administration and operation of the State Court of Richmond County."

SECTION 4.

Said Act is further amended by revising Section 2-7 as follows:

"SECTION 2-7.

The judge shall take an oath to faithfully administer and discharge the duties of his or her office in accordance with the Constitution and laws of the State of Georgia, which oath may be administered by any officer authorized under the laws of this state to administer oaths."

SECTION 5.

Said Act is further amended by adding a new Part III to read as follows:

"PART III**SECTION 3-1.**

There is created a third division of the State Court of Richmond County. The third division of the state court shall be governed by the provisions of general law contained in Chapter

7 of Title 15 of the O.C.G.A., relating to state courts, and by the additional provisions of this part.

SECTION 3-2.

- (a)(1) In addition to all other judges of the state court, there shall be one judge of the third division. The qualifications and election of the judge shall be as provided by general law.
- (2) Except as otherwise provided in this section, said judge shall have and may exercise all powers, duties, jurisdictions, privileges, and immunities of the present judges of the State Court of Richmond County under the provision of this Act and the general law applicable to said present judges.
- (b) The initial judge shall be appointed by the Governor for an initial term beginning on July 1, 2007, and expiring on December 31, 2008, and upon the election and qualification of a successor.

SECTION 3-3.

- (a) The judge shall receive the same compensation as the present judges of the State Court of Richmond County payable in equal monthly installments from the funds of Augusta-Richmond County, Georgia. The judge is designated as a full-time judge and may not engage in the private practice of law.
- (b) Any salary supplement heretofore enacted by Augusta-Richmond County, Georgia, shall also be applicable to the judge.

SECTION 3-4.

The judge of the State Court of Richmond County who has served the longest period of time in office as judge of said court shall be the chief judge of the State Court of Richmond County.

SECTION 3-5.

The chief judge shall receive additional compensation for performing the handling of the administration and operation of the State Court of Richmond County.

SECTION 3-6.

Such chief judge shall be responsible further for the administration and the expeditious disposition of the business of the state court, both civil and criminal, and shall have power

to make such rules as the chief judge shall deem necessary or proper for such purpose but which are not in conflict with the general laws of this state. Such rules, when approved by the chief judge and filed in the office of the clerk of the State Court of Richmond County, shall be binding upon the other judge or judges of said court. The chief judge shall be vested with the power to make all appointments whenever the law provides for the state court judge to make appointments. Such chief judge may by published rule, or from time to time by order, allocate the jurisdiction and powers of the state court of said county and the duties of the judges thereof; may assign to the other judge or judges of said court such business of said court as the chief judge shall deem appropriate; may require reports from the clerk of the court and from any judge of said court relative to business of the court; and generally shall supervise and direct the disposition of all business, both civil and criminal of said court.

SECTION 3-7.

The judge shall take an oath to faithfully administer and discharge the duties of his or her office in accordance with the Constitution and laws of the State of Georgia, which oath may be administered by any officer authorized under the laws of this state to administer oaths."

SECTION 6.

Said Act is further amended by revising subsection (d) of Section II B as follows:

"(d) The judge of the State Court of Richmond County who has served the longest period of time in office as judge of said court shall be the chief judge of the State Court of Richmond County."

SECTION 7.

All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.